Olga,

The movie About Schmidt (2002) had depicted a life of a retired insurance salesman in a drama-comedy style, where the main role was played by Jack Nicholson. This movie showed how a person’s life can change overnight and how difficult and stressful to deal with the outside world when your inner world is falling apart. I would give this movie 5 stars for being one of the best. Jack Nicholson is a very talented actor and he was able to bring us Warren Schmidt and his unique character, personality, attitude, thoughts, feelings, experiences, actions and make us think about our own life and mortality in a different way.

Jack Nicholson had accurately depicted the aging process and experience of an aging adult in the role of 66-year-old Warren Schmidt. When he was still in shock after his retirement from work, his wife of 42 years had died. Then he discovered that she used to have an affair with his best friend. In addition, Warren was devastated that his daughter was going to marry the wrong person. All these events affected Warren and his search for meaningful life, but he could truly express his thoughts only by writing letters to his “foster” child in Tanzania. His aging body and depressed mind were part of the aging experience affected by a bad chain of events.

This film had depicted aging in a negative way but with some comedy. It was funny to see Warren’s experiences with a water mattress, in-laws, hot tub, and expired pills that took him to “Cloud 9.” But it was a negative experience to see how a young man (Warren’s replacement at work) had treated Warren’s lifetime files as garbage. It was upsetting when Warren finally realized what Helen meant for him but soon after he discovered her affair. This movie showed how the aging process affects an individual, his looks, his behavior, and responses to the surrounding environment.

The movie ends on both the high and low notes. On the one hand, Warren could not think about the difference he made and thought that his life was meaningless. On the other hand, he was moved to tears when he saw the picture that was drawn by his “foster” child. It displayed two stick figures – one for Warren and another for the boy himself.

This movie depicted the concept of primary aging associated with normal changes in a person’s appearance. Both Warren and his wife had experienced these changes in posture, body shape, skin, and hair. Warren even questioned: “Who is this old woman?”.when he was thinking about his aging wife (Badalato & Payne, 2002). In this film, Warren’s wife died from a stroke. According to Mason, stroke is one of the most common causes of death among older adults (2011). Due to the fact that Warren’s wife died suddenly, he was in shock. Then Warren was experiencing a sense of separation anxiety and later he became disorganized and desperate. At his final bereavement phase, Warren started reorganization of his life and adjustment to new routines. According to Mason, people go through these four phases of bereavement (2011).

References

Badalato B. (Producer) & Payne A. (Director). (2002). About Schmidt (Motion Picture). United States. Studio: New Line Home Entertainment

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